

missioners for the Town of Weldon and has been a Deacon at the First Baptist Church in Roanoke Rapids for the past 50 years.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to rise and join me in paying tribute to this outstanding citizen, the Honorable Dock Monteria Brown, Sr.

IN CELEBRATION OF BETTY PIA'S
90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I join my colleague Congressman GEORGE RADANOVICH, and rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of Mrs. Betty Pia, a wonderful mother, advocate, and community leader.

Betty has had an interesting life story. As a native of the state of Georgia, she was born on May 29, 1917. She moved to Madera, CA from Southern California in 1965 with her husband Joe. Betty and Joe have one daughter, Nancy, who they raised in the Central Valley of California. Betty has accomplished much in her life, but she is most known for her commitment and passion for taking care of others. As owner and operator of Magic Heart Guest Home, she has been in the residential care business for over 35 years.

As a community leader, Betty has been involved in the local Women's Improvement Club, Kiwanis Club, Chamber of Commerce, and was the 2005 Grand Marshall of the Old Timer's Day Celebration in Madera. As an advocate of the Valley, Betty has been involved in local, state, and national politics for most of her life.

In Georgia she got her start in politics by serving as President Franklin D. Roosevelt's nurse and developed a personal friendship with President Jimmy Carter, who she later was able to bring to the Valley during his term in office. Despite being a lifelong Democrat, Betty has truly been bipartisan in nature as she has always put people before politics. This is evident in the fact that Betty has served on Congressman RADANOVICH's Educational Committee and has been his delegate to the National Silver Hair Congress for 12 years. Betty has actively supported California Governors that range from former Governor Jerry Brown to former Governor Pete Wilson.

Despite pleas from family and friends to slow down, Betty still continues to operate her guest home and continues to be a driving force in local politics. Throughout the many roads she has traveled, we thank Betty for the many lives that she has touched along the way. It is for these reasons that we join Betty Pia's family and friends in wishing her a blessed 90th birthday and continued health and happiness in the years to come.

VETERANS OUTREACH
IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that as Memorial Day approaches, this Congress is

taking concrete action to help our Nation's veterans.

This week we passed several pieces of legislation designed to both make it easier for veterans to get access to health care and to improve the quality of that care for those who are returning home from Iraq or Afghanistan.

Sometimes it's hard for veterans or their family members to be certain as to what benefits they qualify for and how to apply for them. The Veterans Outreach Improvement Act of 2007 (H.R. 67) seeks to address this problem by mandating greater coordination between the federal and state governments on the availability of programs to help veterans. The bill authorizes \$75 million between 2007 and 2009 for intensified outreach efforts to veterans and their family members.

Due to geographical constraints, many veterans who return home will not have ready access to a military hospital within an easy driving distance of their homes. To help remedy this, Congress is taking action on the Returning Servicemember VA Healthcare Insurance Act of 2007 (H.R. 612). This bill extends from 2 years to 5 years the period of eligibility for VA health care for veterans of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, regardless of whether or not a veteran has an established service-connected condition. As a result, veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will have more time to take advantage of VA health care whether or not they're awaiting the processing of a disability claim.

For many veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, access to routine medical care will not be enough. A large number of American soldiers have experienced traumatic brain injury (TBI) as a result of being injured by road-side bombs or snipers. Passage of the Traumatic Brain Injury Health Enhancement and Long-Term Support Act of 2007 (H.R. 2199), of which I am a co-sponsor, will help meet the special needs of these veterans.

This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish:

A program to screen veterans for traumatic brain injury (TBI);

A comprehensive program for long-term care of post-acute TBI rehabilitation at four geographically dispersed polytrauma networks site and to establish TBI transition offices at these same sites to help better coordinate the delivery of health care and other services to veterans with moderate to severe TBI;

A registry of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who exhibit TBI symptoms;

Centers for TBI research, education, and clinical activities;

A committee on the care of veterans with TBI;

A pilot program for delivering readjustment counseling and mental health services through mobile vet centers; and

An Advisory Committee on Rural Veterans to help develop recommendations on how best to meet the needs of veterans living in rural areas.

Veterans with TBI will require special forms of rehabilitative care and follow up for the rest of their lives, and this bill will help ensure they get the care and services that they've earned.

Mr. Speaker, as America pauses this Memorial Day to remember those who've gone in harms way for the rest of us, Congress can express its thanks to America's veterans by passing these bills today.

JOHN FEINBLATT TESTIMONY
BEFORE CONGRESS—SUPPORT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to respond to and support the testimony by Mr. John Feinblatt, Criminal Justice Coordinator for the City of New York before the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Domestic Policy Subcommittee on May 10, 2007, regarding illegal guns and the Tiahrt amendment.

First, I applaud Michael Bloomberg for his leadership with reducing crime in New York City. Crime fighting is tough and it requires strong and bold leadership to be effective.

Second, I along with other Members of Congress formed the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Illegal Guns in January of 2007. This task force was formed during the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Summit held on January 23, 2007 in Washington, DC. The bipartisan task force is solely concerned about illegal guns and crime control. Let me be clear that the task force supports the Second Amendment and believes in protecting the rights of responsible and legal gun owners. We oppose the traffic in illegal guns which presents a danger to our society.

Third, to begin to address the problems associated with crime and illegal guns, members of the task force and other Members of Congress sent a letter to the leadership of the Commerce Justice and Science Subcommittee requesting Mr. MOLLAHAN and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN to change the language in the Tiahrt Amendment.

We support providing local law enforcement agencies with the tools and information they need to fight crime, particularly getting information on gun trace data.

Lastly, day in and day out, reports are aired in local and national media outlets about people being wounded and killed by guns. I'm certain that the vast majority of those incidents are committed with illegal guns. This is deeply troubling and disheartening to me. Action is needed and it is needed now.

CONGRATULATING THE STUDENTS
OF SUGAR GROVE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, the students of Sugar Grove Elementary School in Warren County, Pennsylvania are making great strides in promoting